WHIRRAKEE

July 2002 Vol. 23 No. 6

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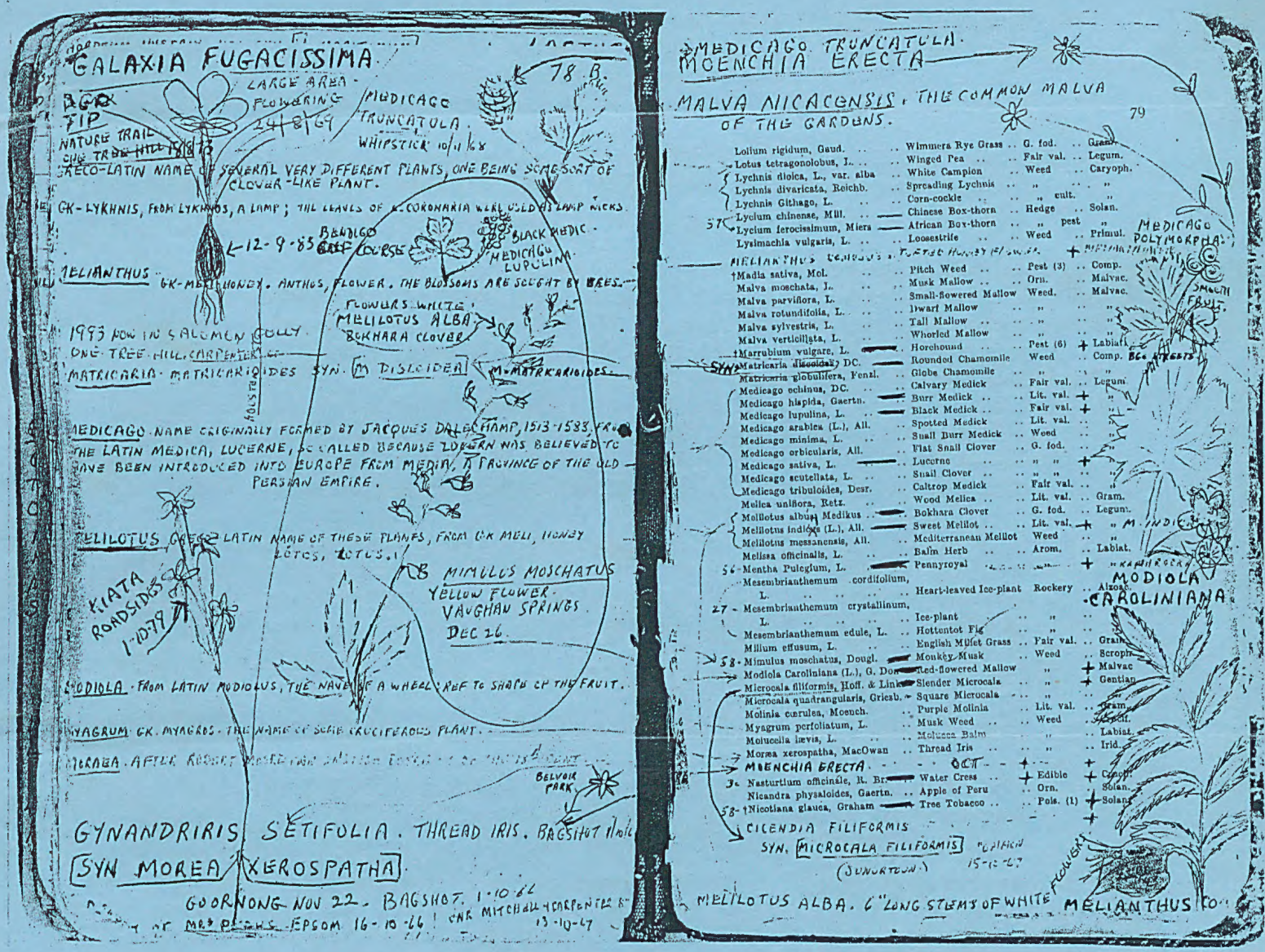

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552

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Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34. These rates include GST.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. The invited speaker at general meetings starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper.
If a workshop is held prior to the meeting, it will be advertised and it usually starts at 7.00pm.
The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearers listed above, together with the following members:
Kate Lottkowitz; Trevor Marshall; Rob Moors, Jan Orr, Stan Pelczynski; Bob Ruddick

Excursions Excursions are conducted irregularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. In addition to local excursions, campouts are held several times each year, usually coinciding with long weekends or holiday periods.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has one active sub-group:

Fauna Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Front Cover: A page in a field naturalist's notebook.....

This is a page from Bob Allen's field book that must have gone everywhere with him. The book was a plant census for Victoria but it was annotated all over with Bob's own sketches and notes. There were poems and songs, notes about plant name changes and incidental observations as well as small articles on field naturalists matters, reproduced from elsewhere or written by Bob himself.
Bob Allen, a life member of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, died in June and this issue is dedicated to him.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club

Vol. 23, No. 6, July 2002

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles.
Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editors' Note
This issue is dedicated to Bob Allen whose activities have left a lasting impressions in our club as can be seen by Peter Ellis' article on page 3. The last club meeting Bob attended was in March this year, and he was pictured amongst the workshop attendants on the April issue's front cover. I have a few more copied pages of Bob's field notebook and might print them in Whirrakee occasionally. They are such excellent examples of the spirit of 'field-natting'. In this context, note that in this issue, nominations are called for numerous executive and committee positions (see page 14). Please consider getting involved. Obviously some work is involved, but much pleasure can be gained as well. This month, we are running another workshop along with the upcoming general meeting. For all of us who have seen and admired the Watkins's photos, this is a marvellous opportunity to learn some of the tricks of the trade. Lastly, a fascinating talk was given by Ern Perkins in the June general meeting. However, we have run out of space this time(!), a summary will appear next month.

VALE BOB ALLEN

Bob Allen passed away on June 1 after suffering a massive stroke the week before. Up until that time Bob at 87 and a half years had been in good health. Although inflicted with the early stages of Alzeimers he remained active in many of his favourite pursuits. This included daily walks collecting plants from the hilltop at Carshalton House where he resided since his wife Em passed away in the previous 18 months. He regularly attended garden maintenance around the home and said he could hear the weeds saying lookout, here comes that Bob Allen, he's going to pull us out. Another interest of Bob's while at Carshalton was keeping a scrap book in which he pasted any interesting pictures and notes from the Bendigo Advertiser on matters from old houses, special trees, nature notes and so on. He also continued to play his button accordion to entertain other residents at the home and fondly regarded them and the staff in particular as 'his mates'.

Bob was a Life Member and a past President of the BFNC and I had the pleasure as Secretary of working with Bob in that capacity in the early 1970's. Both Bob and Tom Patullo were of the generation following our founding notables and shared some different views in club politics to that of the older brigade. I recall a 'push' from Bob and Tom to break away from loyalties to the VFNC, which they saw in good light, but as a Melbourne orientated group. It was Bob and Tom who stood for an alliance with the Western Victorian Field Naturalist Clubs Association at a time when Bendigo had been viewed as strange for standing aside for many years. They were instrumental in having our club join that association and just as I retired from Secretary of BFNC I found myself Secretary/ Treasurer of the WVFNC for two years alongside Bob as President. There was no way I could have refused Bob's request to do so, it was Bendigo's turn and that was that. This assertiveness may come as a surprise as generally Bob was the most easy going character you could ever come across, but as his son Graeme said in the Eulogy, if Bob needed to speak his mind or make a stand he would.

He was a good all rounder in Natural History and had various collections of natural trivia, which he would regularly ensure were tabled at the monthly meeting notes and observation display. In fact, he considered reports on bird sightings, latest wildflower of interest, spider, insect, rock or fossil specimens and the nature table as of prime importance as a club showcase and for providing interest and talking points for new members and visitors. Bob also saw the importance of maintaining regular nature notes and photographs in the Bendigo Advertiser to encourage interest in natural history and to perhaps aid in attracting new members. Bill Perry had been a forerunner in that task for many years. When Tom Patullo joined the club about 1963 or 4 he was, through his business at 'Clearads', situated at the rear of the Bendigo Advertiser adjoining Cambridge Press. He was the maker of all the plates for photographs in the Advertiser. Tom's growing friendship with Bob was an aid together which assisted them in supplying the Advertiser with good nature articles and photographs. This in turn led to the initiation of the producing the Bendigo Naturalist in 1967. The committee for producing the Naturalist consisted of Tom, Bob, Jack Kellam, Frank Robbins and myself. Tom had the printing expertise, Jack the bird information and Jack and Frank the local knowledge on plants and geology. Bob as with the nature table excelled on all interesting matters in both an informative and at times humorous manner. He was a major force behind the magazine and its inception.

Of course Bob is best known for expert knowledge and identification skills with wildflowers and the very tiny plants. Joining the club about 1950 after moving back to Bendigo, Bob determined to learn the names of 5 plants an excursion. In those early days he was a smoker. After having the plants identified by Frank Robbins or Jack Kellam he would dutifully write the names on the cigarette packet or wrapper and take it home to ensure he could remember to add the correct species title to his book of records. In due course Bob applied for a permit as a plant collector. Except in the case of rare species he would generally take up to 4 specimens. One would be dropped at his brother Les's door. Les in turn would make a beautiful watercolour painting of that plant. The other three specimens were pressed and one sent to the herbarium for confirmation of identity and for their records. The other two were carefully mounted on paper and appropriately labelled. Bob drew the blue bordered labels in biro directly on the foolscap. I once asked him why he didn't use the commercially available gummed labels with neat blue borders, which would have made life a lot easier for him. He replied the gum attracted silver fish. He also used to catch a particular

insect a little like a larger version of silver fish, but hairier (I can't remember what they were called unless it was Johnny hairy legs) and release them in his cupboards. These fed on silver fish.

Bob's knowledge of plants was invaluable in the 70's when so many conservation issues were at hand and at the drop of a hat he would knock up a plant list for Salomen's Gully, Jackass Flat, Wychitella, Barfold Gorge, Mitiamo, Rushworth Forest, you name it, on almost every excursion. I think it was every Tuesday night Bob and Frank Robbins would meet compiling a plant census of the Bendigo district and I noticed Frank's card files turning up recently at Bob's house and they are now presumably in the club rooms. Frank would look nervously at his watch about 9pm and race home not staying for supper. One night the doorbell rang, and Frank came back in for supper, Myrtle was away. Jack Kellam commented a little later, 'I haven't seen Robbins for a couple of days, Myrtle's coming home, gees the house is in a mess'.

It was because Bob had kept at least two copies of each plant that a complete set of pressings were donated to the then Bendigo College of Advanced Education in the late 1970's as a resource for Biology students. His duplicate set along with scans of his brother Les's paintings have recently been lodged at the Ironbark Centre at Latrobe University Bendigo.

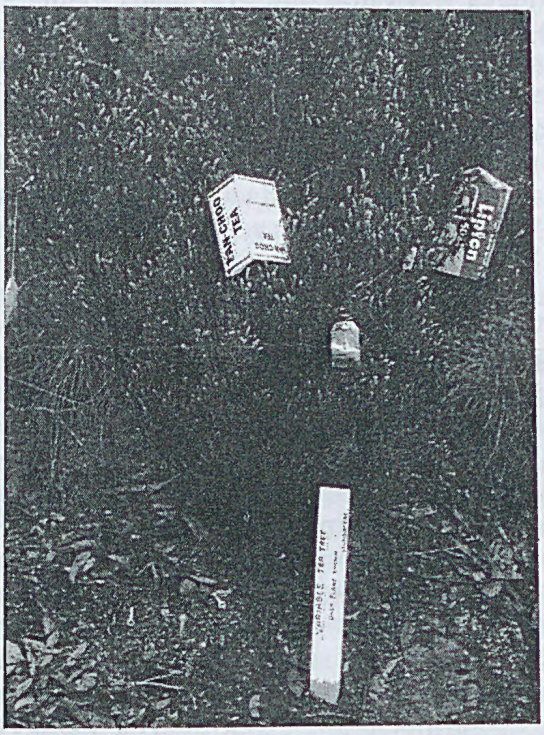
Orchids were a favourite interest with Bob and Tom. Their notes contributed to Whirrakee along with Graham Hill's sketches in series The Orchids of Bendigo & District were invaluable when the Rod Orr and the club revamped The Orchids of Bendigo in book form.

Another major contribution to the club's public profile was Bob's skills in producing top rate nature trails and nature shows. The nature trails first started about the early 70's when members of Geelong Field Naturalists Club were visiting Bendigo. Bob had ties with Geelong because his son Graham lived there and Bob was also a good friend with Jack Wheeler and Graham Pizzey. He wanted to put on a good show for Geelong. Just prior our club had a Whipstick excursion on private land at Red Box Hut. The wildflowers were particularly good that year and through the efforts of Arthur Ebdom second hand galvanised sheet had been obtained to repair the roof of Red Box Hut. Thus a small nature table safe from the weather was set up in the hut and Bob labelled many of the interesting and prominent plants on the track we had previously followed through the bush. It was an enormous success, but with a small problem. Bob had used a water-soluble texta and so the following week with a further run of visitors round the trail, many of the plant names had bled following showers. Red Box Hut ceased to be used for further excursions mainly because it was on private land, but also because we had set up a campaign to seek funding to buy back land such as this. As an offshoot the IDO was introduced and with no small amount of animosity with landholders.

However attention turned to One Tree Hill which we had previously proposed in 1968 as a memorial park to the late Redvers James Eddy. Tom Patullo lived in Retreat Rd near the start of his favourite 'Walk To The Wunna' track and we were trying to maintain interest in conserving One Tree Hill and having the original 100-acre public park increased ten fold. The then Town Clerk, Jack Watts, who was the Secretary of the old public park, had appeared an opponent of any alteration or upgrade to it. Tom organised his walk to the wunna with a suitable press release. Bob after his trial at Red Box Hut had accumulated off-cut stakes from his work at the Bendigo Timber Co, sealed them with white paint and labelled all the plants and other items of interest such as fungi and rocks and pointers to bird nests with permanent texta. The nature trail was so outstanding that schools requested it be made an annual event and Bob and Tom put enormous work into that over many years. The club also received a letter from Jack Watts saying he had walked the nature trail and was extremely impressed.

There were also several occasions when special nature shows were held. There was one in the Memorial Hall, one at MacGillivray Hall when the Minister for Conservation, Bill Borthwick was being enticed to open it and hopefully make a statement on the future of the conservation for the Whipstick. Another was for the Eaglehawk Dahlia and Arts Festival. In all of these Bob did a power of work with displays of his plant pressings around the walls, local wildflower exhibits presented in his specially made and labelled stands and his nature table specials. These included things like the magpie's nest twined out of fencing wire, the block with the termite or borer hole and drilled hole (to guess which was which) collections of insects and spiders, rocks and so on. Of course Jack and Frank, Eric Wilkinson, Graham Hill and many others contributed to these with myself and Tom providing garden native plants. But we can really thank Bob for the major contribution and

impetus behind the nature trails and shows.
When Bob retired from the Timber Company we began to see less of him, as he was now able to spend more time with Em and playing bowls at the Bendigo Club. He was devoted to his family and his grand children occupied much of his time. Nevertheless the love of the bush was foremost on any family excursions and Graeme and Bob's grandchildren paid much tribute to this and his involvement with the BFNC in the Eulogy and their tribute. When driving anywhere Bob would make constant stops to explore the bush and take his grandchildren with him, usually with Em sitting in the car saying 'We haven't all day Bob!' Graeme said most times when Bob played golf he would hit into the rough, just so he could see what plants were growing there. Bob's humour was always at the fore and his family had many funny tales to relate. I can remember a club campout at Mt Arapiles many years ago when Bob organised a game of cooty. He blew the whistle at all the wrong times and had members standing up right left and centre. His nature trails were always mirth provoking. At one point he had a box nailed to a tree with a sign, 'In case of fire open'. Of course most opened it and inside it read 'I said in case of fire'. Then there was the plant labelled Variable Tea Tree (it was a Coffee Bush with different brands of tea bags, packets and plastic spoons suspended as flowers).



Variable Tea Tree

He loved his music and his name Robert Bruce was no chance choice in terms of his Scottish ancestry. There was a time when we nearly all wore Tam O'Shanters on club excursions and I believe Bob sparked that early tradition off.

Bob Allen and Tom Patullo on the largest mallee fowl's nest in the Whipstick.

Bob's wealth of knowledge, friendship, bright spirit and humour will be sadly missed. But as a celebration and tribute of his life his funeral ceremony by the family was top rate. I felt like applauding on several occasions. It was my honour to play Bob out on his favourite instrument, the button accordion, to his favourite tune 'Peggy O'Neil' and a selection of Scottish songs.

Jack Ipsen and Bob Allen enjoying themselves at Ruedin's Eucalyptus factory in 1974 on a WVFNCA excursion

The Field Nats Garden in Autumn/Winter 2002

by Matthew Comer

The plants in the garden have survived our extended dry weather through summer/autumn and the first part of winter quite well. A small number of older, established plants have been lost. These include a Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) and a large Woolly Wattle (*Acacia lanigera*), plus a few others. Apart from these, the rest of the established parts of the garden are healthy and looking good.

In the new sections of the garden, the survival of the plants planted last winter has been good. There have been some losses but many plants are alive and, in some cases, have grown exceptionally well. A few species, such as *Acacia ausfeldii*, Drooping Cassinia (*Cassinia arcuata)* and Grey Mulga (*Acacia brachyobotra* have grown close to, or over one metre high!
At the moment, our local winter-flowering wattles are brightening up the garden. These are Woolly Wattle (*Acacia lanigera*), Bent Leaf Wattle (*Acacia flexifolia*) and Spreading Wattle (*Acacia genistifolia*). A number of other wattle species are developing masses of buds for their later flowering period.

Also, at this time, the correas are flowering and the Blue Mallee (*Eucalyptus polybractea*) has many clusters of its showy flowers. The Drooping Cassinia has produced its abundant crop of seed which has gradually dispersed over recent weeks. Ruby Saltbush (*Enchylaena tomentosa*) has also been producing its seed, enclosed in the bright fleshy fruit, for many months.

Some other plant species have quietly produced a few flowers right through the dry weather since last spring. These are plants which probably would not be flowering through this time in their natural habitat. It seems that the thick layer of mulch on the garden, and the lack of an overstorey of large, competitive trees allows these plants to obtain enough moisture to keep flowering for an extended period.
These species are *Minuria interriginia*, Clasping Goodenia (*Goodenia benthariana*), Cypress Daisy Bush (*Olearia teretifolia*) and Sticky Everlasting (*Bracteantha viscosa*). The mulch has probably also aided in the survival of the newer plants in the garden.

Spring Gully Reservoir Dams Improvement Project

From Coliban Water (www.coliban.com.au)

Progress Report
Spring Gully Reservoir was constructed in 1868 and raised in 1929. Following a review of Coliban Water's reservoirs, it was decided that, on the completion of the AQUA project, Spring Gully would no longer be needed to supply water for domestic usage. It will continue to be used to supply rural customers with water for irrigation.

Coliban Water has appointed Gutteridge Haskins and Davey Pty Ltd (GHD) to design improvements to the dam to satisfy modern dam safety requirements. GHD, a firm of consulting engineers and environmentalists, is a leader in the field of dam engineering in Australia and overseas. They have engineered many of the large dams in Australia and have staff with the necessary experience to undertake the design work at Spring Gully Reservoir.

Preliminary investigation have shown that the spillway needs to be enlarged so that even extreme floods can be passed safely without endangering the dam. In addition, the dam embankment is to be stabilised by the addition of a 'buttress' embankment on the downstream side of the dam to bring it up to current safety standards.
The design phase is scheduled for completion by the end of July 2002, following which tenders will be called for the construction phase.
The water level in the reservoir is being lowered in preparation for construction. It is currently around 4m below full supply level.

Environmental Issues
A number of environmental studies have been undertaken, as well as extensive consultation with a number of associations and government departments.

Coliban Water is ensuring that the area will retain its environmental status and that any works will have minimal impact on water birds.

Construction Timetable
It is hoped to commence construction his summer with all work finalised in late 2003.
An Open Day will be held once the design has been completed.

World Environment Day 2002

by Bill Holsworth

The North Central Catchment Management Authority hosted a major event involving over 800 primary and secondary school children to promote an understanding of World Environment Day. Bronwen Burr, Regional Waterwatch Coordinator, NCCMA, headed the team of organisers. The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc. assisted by providing the instruction and resources at one of the 8 sites at Lake Weeroona on 5 June. One-quarter of the students received the benefit of the information and enthusiasm we brought to the event. In addition there was a display area for all the students and Stan Pelczynski set up 2 large panels with information on biodiversity.

The theme of the program, *From Your Street to Your Creek*, complemented the Bendigo Urban Stormwater Program support by the City of Greater Bendigo. Students were divided into groups of 50 and the instruction time for each group was 30 minutes. We further subdivided each group of 50 into 4 small groups of 12 to 15 students to give more personal attention to the students. Five members of our Club made their contribution by devoting the day to educating students.

AQUATIC PLANTS GROUP

John Lindner developed the theme related to aquatic plants. He brought fresh specimens so students could examine the plants in detail. The topics covered were:

1. How and where they grow

Rooted, submerged, emergent, not rooted, marginal , wet area plants.

2. Special features and adaptations

Roots, rhizomes, seed production, salinity tolerance, oxygen absorbing structures.

3. Advantages and disadvantages in growing in water

Moisture availability, exposure to sun, nutrient cycling, pollutants, water level fluctuations.

4. Ecological role

Life cycle, decomposition provides nutrients for microorganisms and plankton, food web, shelter, CO_2 and O_2 cycles.

5. Role in maintaining environmental quality

Filter water, trap fine solid material, absorb nutrients, provide habitat, reduce human impact on the ecosystem.

TREE GROUP

Jane Cleary concentrated her presentation on the importance of trees.

1. A brief local history

2. Trees in urban and rural situations

Effects of plants on drainage

Structure of different tree species

3. Identification of trees in the area

4. Environmental role of trees

5. Build a Tree – activity

6. Conclusion

Summarize why trees have an important ecological role in the environment.

Challenge students to produce their own 'Street to Creek' plan.

CREEK GROUP

Jan Orr dealt directly with the creek topic by asking the students whether (at the Lake Weeroona site) we had a creek or a drain. She quoted from the comments made by Robert Haverfield in 1851. "The flats, carpeted with green grass, were dotted here and there with comely and shady gum trees, while the creek banks, shaded with wattle, sloped down to a chain of water holes which in the spring and winter seasons, and indeed all year round, before the gold era, contained a good supply of sweet clear water..." Jan then told the students about the discovery of gold in 1851 and the change to this idyllic scene. Gold mining destroyed the waterholes and all its aquatic life, and the creek became a drain for the gold fields effluent. The town's solution to this problem was to straighten and build the concrete and stone channel we have today. She asked the students, What should we call it now. Bendigo Creek?, Bendigo Drain?, or Bendigo Dreek?

BIRD GROUP

Barbara Pelczynska and Bev Culvenor introduced their groups of students to the fascinating life of aquatic birds. Students were introduced to aquatic birds, their place in biodiversity and dependence on the state of the environment. Reference was also made to their predators, including the water rat. Birds on Lake Weeroona were identified with the aid of binoculars, books and posters. The importance of silhouettes, shapes of beaks and feet, colour of feathers and voices were emphasised as means of identification. The fact that so many different birds utilise the same aquatic environment was used to show that each species has its own requirements of food, shelter and nesting sites.

We were fortunate to have many birds on the lake and the binoculars to see their details clearly. We also had a museum study skin of a water rat and one of the groups actually observed, through binoculars, a rat swimming in the lake.

In our opinion the day was very successful. We especially enjoyed the excellent play written and performed jointly by the St Francis of the Fields and the Comet Hill Primary Schools. The play was performed as an introduction to the activities.

Letter from the Bendigo and District Environment Council (BDEC) to people concerned about Victorian forests.

This letter refers to an 'enclosed document' called 'Wood Utilization Plans (WUPS) and Coupe plans processes'. This document is printed after the letter.

Dear.....

If you are involved in the struggle to save Victoria's forests, it may be useful for you to find out how the WUPS and Coupe Plans are devised and implemented in your region.

Bendigo & District Environment Council has recently done so for the forests in our region.

We spoke with two senior foresters who gave us the explanations and later endorsed the enclosed document as an accurate account of how these processes work.

Please read the enclosed document carefully and imagine that you wish to conduct a survey of a particular coupe. The enclosed document shows some of the problems you may encounter, for:-

• How is it possible for you to get a clear and precise description of a coupe plan in order to compare it with what is actually happening in the forest when the coup plan is a record of what happened?
• How would you know that a mistake was made when the results of cutting are in process to be written into the 'plan' and you will not be able to identify them as mistakes?
• Because DNRE always has right to change a coupe plan, you are effectively at any given time without a plan and so how can you survey what is in a coupe or prove any discrepancy?
• How can you ensure that habitat trees are protected in a saw log coupe when they only have to be marked before cutting commences for sawlog production and need not be marked before any preceding commencement of cutting for firewood or fence posts or both in the same coupe? Also habitat trees need to be marked in the part of the coupe from which sawlogs are removed.

We believe that this process is how forestry keeps control of the forest, and continues to log unsustainably to the great detriment of this public resource, not to mention natural habitat and biodiversity.

This bureaucratic double speaks needs to be questioned at all levels. It would be valuable to find out what happens in different regions. You could use our paper as a basis to question your own regional DNRE and contact us if you would like to use our original questions.

Yours faithfully,

Stuart Fraser,
Convenor.

Here is the 'enclosed document' referred to. It was signed by Jim Allen and Wendy Radford as being an accurate description of discussion undertaken at the meeting:

Wood Utilization Plans (WUPS) and Coupe plans processes as clarified in discussions between Barbara Chmielewska, Wendy Radford (Bendigo and District Environment Council), Les Vearing, Forester in charge of Bendigo FMA, and Jim Allen, Forester in charge of WUPS for N.W. Region.
Meeting: View Street NRE, 9:30am Wednesday 1st May 2002.

The WUPS take 9 months to produce. Forest officers carry our recognisance surveys in August/September and submit initial information to regional offices for WUPS preparation, in accordance with WUPS Guidelines and forestry quotas. Forest officers mostly rely on their working knowledge of the forests for this initial input, but sometimes will refer to licencees,

retired Forest Officers and works crew. Flora and fauna significant sites register is the map base that is used for preparing the coup plan maps. However, the coupes are not assessed in full detail for production of products at this stage.
The Box-Ironbark forests have had formal, detailed records kept only since 1990 so the WUPS process is important for building current records.

The WUPS are presented for public comment in February each year. DNRE does NOT call a public meeting to discuss these plans. Public comments are read and considered by Senior Forester Martin Woodward and Production Planner Jim Allen. WUPS have been changed in response to this public comment process. For example, Field Naturalists submission alleging that forestry operations would be detrimental to flora, or would create an erosion hazard, has resulted in changes to the WUPS at this stage.

Who makes the final decision on what will happen to each coupe?

This comes down to what produce is envisaged for each coupe by the Forest Officer. He makes his assessment in consultation the Forester in charge of the Bendigo FMA. Jim Allen incorporates this plan into the WUPS, other businesses in DNRE make comment, as does the public, then the plans are signed off by the Regional Manager.
A coupe plan is produced for each coupe and generally 3 copies are kept: (1) A copy is kept with the Forest Officer an signed by the Lessee. (2) A copy is kept by the Regional Office. (3) Another copy is kept in the work centre office relevant to the coupe.

The original plan for each coupe may be viewed at the DNRE office. The working copy of each coupe plan incorporating the coupe diary is unavailable fo public perusal. The public may view the original coupe plan by appointment at a mutually convenient time.

Coupe plans cannot leave the DNRE office or b copied. Why? The guidelines for the WUPS stipulate this. (One explanation offered was that in the past, coupe plans have been taken by the public to be set in concrete, whereas alterations may occur. Hence there may be a demonstrable discrepancy between the original coupe plan, the working coupe plan and what has happened in the forest.) Coupe plans are actually a RECORD. A coupe cannot be cut before the coupe plan has been approved. BDEC's question "Why can the cut be commenced before the coupe plan has been finalised?" used terminology that Les and Jim saw as inaccurate because a coupe plan is really a record rather than a hard and fast plan of what will happen in future. Therefore 'approved' rather than 'finalized' was a better description of the process.
There are three classes of coupe plans in the Bendigo region. They are Fire wood, Fence-post - Fire wood and Sawlog.

• Fire wood: Only fire wood can be produced from a fire wood coupe unless coupe plans are altered.

• Fence post - Fire wood: trees under 40cm, or Ironbarks under 45cm are the only trees that can be cut, either for fire wood or fence posts at the forester's discretion, unless coupe plans are altered.

• Sawlog: Sawlogs, fence posts and fire wood can be produced from this type of coupe. The officer in charge can use his discretion as to how and in what order the coupe is to be cut, for example the officer may decide, after having looked at a part of the coupe that may contain only small tees, to start by cutting this section for fire wood, and then in another section, the officer may decide to cut fence posts and fire wood. A section may then be found to contain sawlogs and habitat trees and will therefore have to be marked before the cut commences. A post cutter may begin before habitat trees are marked, but he can only cut 40/45cm trees.

Coupe plans must be approved prior to harvesting commencing. Changes from the approved plans can be made but this is not often the case.
In the Bendigo FMA most coupes are INTEGRATED coupes, i.e. Are approved for sawlogs, fence posts and fire wood. Habitat trees have to marked in a sawlog coupe before the cutting commences. However, it is possible to start from the other end, form the fire wood production, and only when it is decided to cut sawlogs – then habitat trees have to be marked. See product marking tree size prescriptions.

Coupe plans may be altered in the following way:

1. The WUPS guidelines allow for coupe boundaries to be adjusted by a maximum of 20% on the say so of the Forestry Officer, but this is an uncommon occurrence – none this year.

2. Foerst officer can reassess coupe can make a submission for re-approval which must go to forester in charge and Jim Allen, and other NRE businesses for approval. There is no opportunity for public consultation at this stage. The re-assessment and re-approval process may take from one to several days and and hence be quite quick.

3. Salvage Coupes I.e. Coupes suffering from storm or fire damage: The senior forester may approve coupes less than 5 hectares. Coupes 5 to 100 hectares can be signed off by the Regional Manager and manager of Forest Victoria. Coupes larger than 100 hectares must go through the same process as WUPS approval, including public comment.

Is it not in the interest of the department to cll all coupes sawlog?

This would not conform to quota guidelines. The WUPS are drawn up in relation to quotas. For example, if 800 cubic metres of sawlog is prescribed, it is incongruous to put 30 000 cubic metres of sawlogs on the WUPS.

Can the public see a coupe plan that has not been finalised?

Re-approval of coupe plans is often fast and impractical for the public to be consulted at all stages. They may be able to see alterations if they knew they were happening, but there is no imperative in the WUPS Guidelines to advertise every change. Few changes are made. May be a wet winter will require alterations of cutting to a higher ridge contingency coupe, but winters have been so dry, this flexibility has not been needed in the past 10 years.

Jim Allen made the point that Bendigo FMA is selectively cut. Habitat trees that are marked are not likely to be felled next time around. "Chances are" they will stay until they fall down. Les Vearing values hollow trees, but not in accordance with their diameter. He says that diameter is not an indicator of hollows in the box-ironbark and gave us several papers to read regarding this claim.

VFNCA Spring Camp, October 25-27 2002 Ballarat

Hosted by the Field Naturalists' Club of Ballarat

First Circular

The Field Naturalists' Club of Ballarat invites you to the VFNCA Spring Camp based in Ballarat. The 50th anniversary of the FNCB is to be celebrated during the weekend together with the launch of the publication "Discovering Ballarat's Bushland - A Guide to 34 selected natural places in the Ballarat Region".

This circular provides details of the program, recommended accommodation and a registration/excursion selection form.

Venues

- The venue for registration,meetings and the departure point for excursions will be the Ballarat Horticultural Centre, corner of Gillies and Gregory Streets, Ballarat (Vic Roads 254 F8).
- The 50th Anniversary dinner on Saturday October 26th will be held at the Webbcona Bowls Club, corner of Grevillea Road and Grandview Grove (Vic Roads 254 J5)
- Lunch on Sunday 27th October will be on the western shore of Lake Wendouree and participants are invited to order a Box Lunch (Chicken or Cold Meat, salads).
- Tea and coffee-making facilities will be provided at the Horticultural Centre from Friday evening until Sunday morning.

Accommodation

Participants will organise their own accommodation. Recommended caravan parks are the Lake Wendouree Tourist Park which is directly opposite the Horticultural Centre, while the Windfall Caravan Park is 5km away on the Avenue of Honour (old Western Highway). Both have cabins, powered and unpowered sites and are rated 4.5 stars. Their websites have illustrations, maps and prices.

Lake Wendouree Tourist Park
195 Gillies Street
Ballarat 3350
ph. 03 5338 1381, website: ballarat.com/lwtp.htm
e-mail: lakewendouree@giant.net.au

Windmill Caravan Park
Avenue of Honour
Alfredton 3350
ph. 03 5334 1686, website: ballarat.com/windmill.htm
e-mail: windmill@qonline.com.au

Registration
A standard fee of $15 applies whether you attend for all or part of the program. Registration will be available at the Horticultural Centre from 4pm on Friday 25th October. Please bring your own name tag.

Program
- On Friday evening participants will be welcomed at our meeting room at the Horticultural Centre where an introductory slide show will provide an overview of the weekend's activities. Supper, provided by the Ballarat members, will follow.
- Full and half-day excursions will be conducted on Saturday and half-day excursions on Sunday morning, led by Club members and invited field naturalists.
- On Saturday evening our 50th Anniversary Dinner will be held where we will launch our book *Discovering Ballarat's Bushland*; the guest speaker Tim D'Ombrain will speak on *Local Conservation Issues*.

At present, the following excursions are planned. Each excursion, numbered for booking purposes, is held within a radius of 35 km of Ballarat. The details below include excursion distance using private cars to travel to the destination. A maximum of 20 people per group is envisaged unless otherwise stated. Final scheduling will take into account preferences indicated on the registration form.

Saturday: Full day Excursions

1. **The Flora of Enfield State Forest**. Enfield Forest - Spring wildflowers including a wide variety of orchid species with Pat and Bill Murphy, FNCB. 25km south of Ballarat.
2. **Surface Point to Enfield Walk**. 8km walk with John Gregurke FNCB to observe flora, birds and mining relics. Easy walking along tracks, need to carry lunch. 30 km south of Ballarat.
3. **Lal Lal Historic Reserve**. Historic Iron Mine and Blast Furnace. Complex geology gives rise to a variety of extractive industries; good variety of flora and bird life - with Greg Binns FNCB. 33km south-east of Ballarat.
4. **Long Point Flora Reserve; St Georges Lake, Creswick and Mt Beckworth.** Ken McDonnel, FNCB will take us to three localities providing a diverse range of interests including flora, fauna, geology and history. We will walk around St Georges Lake (1.5km, easy walking). At Mt Beckworth, 35 from Ballarat, the emphasis will be on orchids (flat ground). Round trip 80km.

Half Day - Morning

5. **Volcanic Geology of Dobson's Bay**, a maar forming part of Lake Burrumbeet 20km west of Ballarat with Noel Schleiger FNCV. If time permits we will visit Winter Swamp as we return.
6. **Clarkesdale Bird Sanctuary** - an area managed by BOCA and a haven for a variety of birds - with David Coutts, Ranger. 35km south-west of Ballarat.

Half Day - Afternoon

7. **Devil's Kitchen** - a variety of basalt formations, and a chance to see peregrine falcons - with Noel Schleiger. 33km south-west of Ballarat.
8. **Jubilee Mine** - substantial goldmining relics amid stringybarks, peppermints and wattles - with Jack Netherway FNCB. 35km south-west of Ballarat.

Sunday: Morning Excursions

9. **Lake Wendouree Birds:** Join Ballarat BOCA on their walk to celebrate Bird Week. **8.30am start**. The walk is limited to the western side of the lake where trees and reed beds provide good habitat.. Participants may move from this activity to the Trout Hatchery visit at 10.30am (see No 13).
10. **Yarrowee Creek Walk,** northern section with Gail Whyte FNCB. Easy walking to see how the rehabilitation of this formerly degraded waterway has proceeded.
11. **Birds of Creswick Regional Park:** Travel 18km to Slaty Creek - mainly birding with some botany. Short easy walking - with Ken Hammond FNCV/BOCA.
12. **Mt Buninyong:** A look at the flora, fauna and geology of this prominent landmark with John Mildren FNCB.
13. **Trout Hatchery:** located on the shore of Lake Wendouree, where fish are produced for stocking purposes. You will have a guided tour

of the facility at 10.30am with members of the Ballarat Fish Acclimatisation Society which should take about an hour, at this time of the year the eggs are stripped from the fish.

14. **Ballarat Astronomical Observatory:** Members of the Observatory will show you around the telescopes and historic site. A charge of no more than $5.50 is made.

For further information contact:
John Gregurke (Secretary)
1 John Street
Wendouree 3355
ph. 5339 4993
e-mail: jgregurke@giant.net.au

Carol Hall (president)
5 Elizabeth Street
Wendouree 3355
ph. 5339 2255
e-mail: chall@netconnect.com.au

Accommodation Enquiries -
Ballarat Visitor Information Centre,
Sturt Street (cnr. Albert Street)
ph. 1600 446 633
e-mail: tourism@ballarat.vic.gov.au

A Registration Form is on page 13.

Discovering Ballarat's Bushland

The Field Naturalists' Club of Ballarat announces the publication of its book *Discovering Ballarat's Bushland*, produced to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Club. This 50 page book details 34 bush areas within a 50km radius of the city, with directions, descriptions of the habitat, flora, fauna, geology and history. A map and 8 pages of colour illustrations are provided. Limp cover RRP $12.

Orders are invited at the special pre-publication price of $10. Please complete one of the alternatives below:

1. I wish to order.....copies of *Discovering Ballarat's Bushland* @ $10 per copy plus postage and packing $2 and enclose a cheque for $.....made out to the Field Naturalists' Club of Ballarat.

2. I wish tp order.....copies of *Discovering Ballarat's Bushland* @ $10 per copy which I will pick up and pay for at the Ballarat Spring Camp.

Name.....

Address.....

Club.....

Editor's note: there was no address given for this book offer. Presumably the order can be sent to the contact addresses for the Spring Camp, see left column on this page.

National Tree Day – Sunday July 28th

Last year,National Tree Day was celebrated by 110 000 volunteers who planted 1.2 million native trees and shrubs at 1 800 locations around Australia. This year, Tree DAy falls on Sunday July 28th – and we really like to get you involved.

On National Tree Day, councils, schools, community and green groups all plant trees and shrubs that are native to their local area. It would be great of your group could join us in organising one or more planting sites in your community on the day.

There are two days in which you can participate:
- Schools Tree Day which is on Friday, July 26th.
- The main National Tree Day which falls on Sunday, July 28th.

May be you can turn one of your existing planting sites or activity days into a Tree Day event? Your event doesn't have to held on Tree Day itself if you already have something planned a few weeks either side of the event. This will hopefully make it easier for you to get involved with Tree Day.

To register a site, please fax or post the enclosed 'Tree Planting Site Registration Form' to Planet Ark (brochure for details is available on request from the editor). If we can help you with media coverage or volunteers, please let us know. Working together, we can make a real difference.

Jon Dee
(Founder of Planet Ark)

Planet Ark is an Environmental Foundation.
website: www.planetark.org/trees/
e-mail: treeday@planetark.org

See Diary page for BFNC activity on the day

VFNCA Spring Camp October 25-27 2002

Ballarat

Registration Form

Contact names:

1.....

2.....

Address.....

Phone..... **Email**.....**Club**.....

Excursion Selection

Mark the preferred excursions for each person attending the camp. (See information sheet for excursion numbers). List an excursion for each day with a **1** (for first preference), and one or more additional excursions with a **2** (for 2nd preference), remembering that there are half-day excursions.

	Saturday								Sunday					
Name	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**

I/We will be attending the FNCB 50th Anniversary Dinner @ $20 per head on Sat. Oct. 26 (3-course meal; bar will be open - no BYO)

No.	$

Any dietary requirements e.g. vegetarian ?
Please state.....

I/We wish to order a Box Lunch (Chicken/Cold Meat, Salad, Fresh Fruit Salad, cutlery) @ $6 per head on Sun. Oct. 27.

	No.	$
Chicken		
Cold Meat		

Registration @ $15 per person	$
TOTAL COST	$

Please complete and take a copy.

Return to: Field Naturalists' Club of Ballarat,
PO Box 328W,
Ballarat West 3350 **by September 13th 2002.**

Make cheques payable to **VFNCA Camp Account.**

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Speaker Syllabus for General Meetings 2002– Second Wednesday 8:00 pm

Please check each **WHIRRAKEE** for additional events or changes. If a workshop is planned, it will start at 7:00pm. The speaker will be introduced at 8:00 pm.

Date - 2001	Topic	Speaker
10 July	Trust for Nature and its Conservation Activities	Michael Looker
14 August	Spineless Wonders - an Introduction to the Importance of Invertebrates	Dr Alan Yuen
11 September	***Annual General Meeting***	
9 October	Grevillea Hunting Around Australia	Neil Marriott
13 November	What has been achieved in Waterways Management in the NC Region	Greg Peters
11 December	**Christmas Dinner**	

In readyness for the Annual General Meeting, nominations for office bearers are called for now. Nominations are due in August. There are many vacancies for the executive, committees and sub-committees which need to be filled with eager volunteers. Please consult the inside front page for the types of positions available and consider standing for one of them.

Nomination Form:

I,.....nominate

.....

for the position of

.....

Seconded by.....

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Fauna Study Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meeting

Wednesday, July 10 7.00pm
Note earlier starting time
SPECIAL EXTRA WORKSHOP
'Basic Photography', making the best use of your photographic equipment, presented by Rob Watkins. Bring your own camera and other photographic equipment.

8.00pm
In July, the main speaker, Michael Looker will talk about 'Trust for Nature and its Conservation Activities'.

Fauna Study Group

Wednesday, July 24 7.30pm
Mountain Pygmy Possum - Kerrie Norris

Other meetings planned so far:

August 28	Frogs by Night - on location at Kangaroo Flat Botanical Garden
September 25	A.G.M. - topic of interest to be announced.

Bird Observers Group

This group meets (in the clubrooms) on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm. Next meetings are on:

Wednesday, July 3 7.30pm
Topic; Birds – more 'bits and pieces' – general discussion following on from Glenise's June workshop. Bring any special 'bits and pieces' to contribute.

Wednesday, August 7 7.30pm
Topic; Keeping records, a subject inspired by Ern Perkins' presentation 'Monitoring Changes in Box-Ironbark Forests'.
Wednesday, September 4 7.30pm
Topic: Mystery birds – seldom seen, but constantly heard in Spring.

Excursions

Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th August
Swift Parrot Survey
Contact: Matthew Comer
(ph 5432 2380 for details)

Saturday 24th August
Spring Gully Reservoir
Meet: 9.00am Shakespeare Street gate
Contact: Glenise Moors
(ph 5439 6254 for details)

October Excursion (date to be announced)
Field trip – Grassland Birds
Contact: Anne bridley 5449 3479.

For "National Tree Day" Sunday 28th July, 2002 the Club, in cooperation with Bendigo Native Plant Group, will have a 'Planting Day' in the Indigenous Garden starting at 10am and finishing around 12noon.

All welcome, morning tea provided

Future Excursion

Could people interested in a day excursion to Healesville Sanctuary (for a behind-the- scenes tour) please contact Maurie Lewis (0407 427179) or Bill Holsworth (5443 4063)

VNPA Bushwalking and Activities Program, Saturday August 31
KAMAROOKA STATE PARK (limit 15)
GRADE: Medium, 16 km
LEADER: Keith Stockwell 5480 9254
stocky@echuca.net.au>stocky@echuca.net.au
Circuit walk through flowering wattles, mallee, box and melaleuca, using a recently cut track through thick scrub and a dry creek bed.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.
W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals.
It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Natural Resources and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433.